

A Book of Sorts

Written by Lee Stanfield

Illustrated by Alison Jeffs

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Lee Stanfield, Author 01/07/15

You may order additional copies of this
book or contact the author at:
simplee@cox.net
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DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

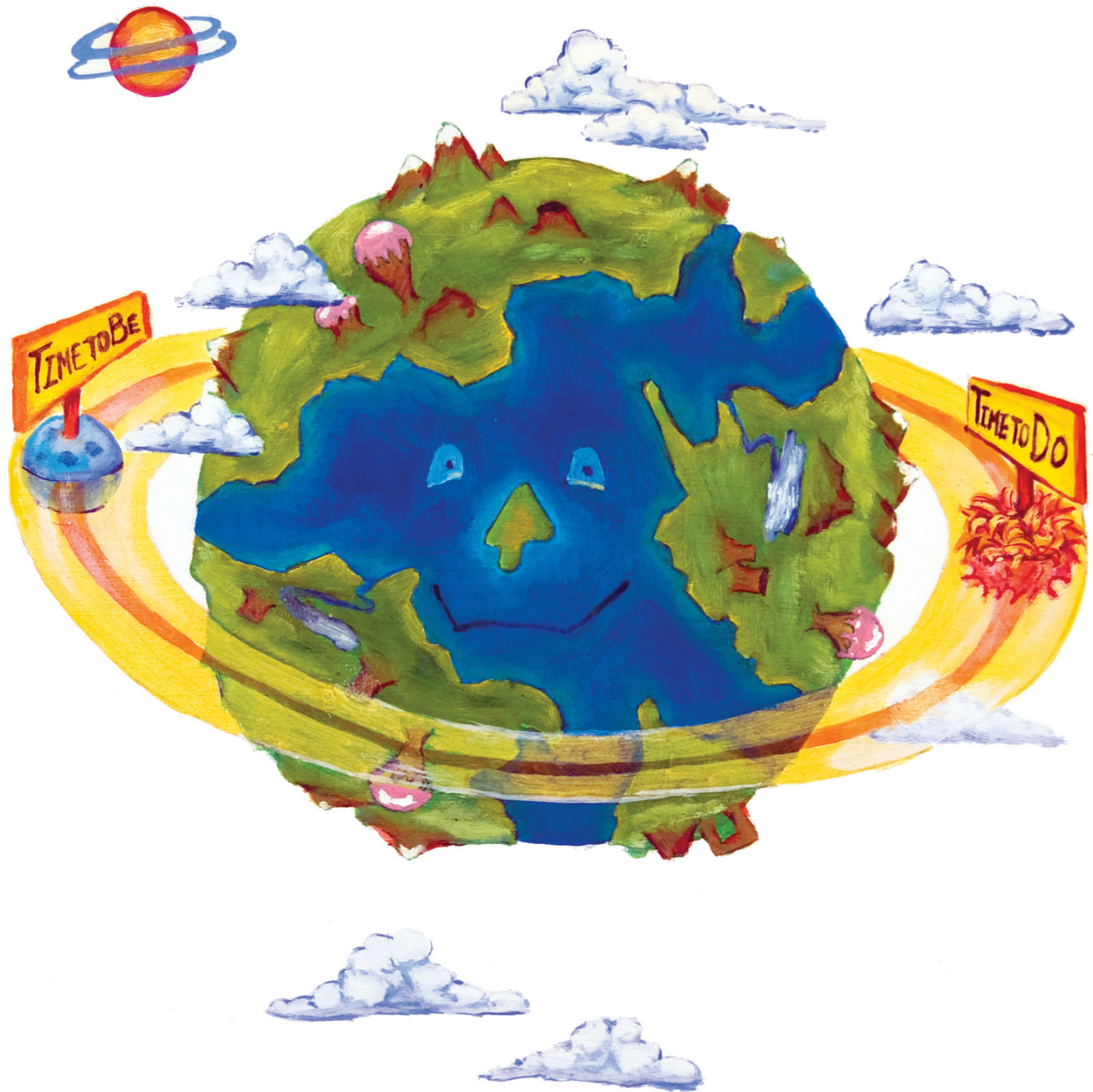
I dedicate this book to all sorts of beings everywhere, and especially to my daughter Terri, my son Gary, my grandbabies Leeanne and Peter (two delightful and very young beings) and to the numerous feline, canine, & other furry, feathered, scaled & green beings I have been privileged to know.

I would like to acknowledge the amazing assortment of all Earthly beings, who have influenced me throughout my life in ways of which I am consciously aware, and in ways of which I am consciously unaware.

I thank all of you for doing your part in the network which sustains this planet and all life upon it. I thank you for sustaining my life, and providing the inspiration for me to write this poem on behalf of all beings.

I would like to thank one being in particular.... Pamala Ballingham, for her steadfast belief in my ability to write, and in my persistence to get this book published. Pamala is an extraordinarily talented artist and writer of great creativity and imagination. Several of the first beings for this book sprang from a delightful synergy of our combined inspiration, imagination, and humor. Thank you Pamala.

Another being with my profound gratitude, is the artist who executed the excellent oil paintings illustrating this book. Alison Jeffs has succeeded in beautifully and accurately depicting beings and scenarios which existed only in my imagination, or in my rather crudely drawn sketches. The fact that she was able to do this with our only communication being through email or phone (we have never met face to face) is a testament to her imagination and talent. Thank you, Alison.



Once upon a planet there was time, lots of time....
time for work, time for play, time for making words rhyme.
Why there was even time for just being, not really doing at all.



And speaking of beings...
there were all sorts... some being large, some being small.



There were very short beings, designed to crawl,
and there were others who were really quite tall.



There were wide sorts



and **NARROW** sorts,



and sorts who sometimes wore short shorts.



There were sorts with leaves



and sorts with legs.



There were sorts with wings who hatched from eggs.



There were sorts with scales and sorts with stings.



There were sorts with all manner of things.



And even though, here and there, a being might feel out of sorts,



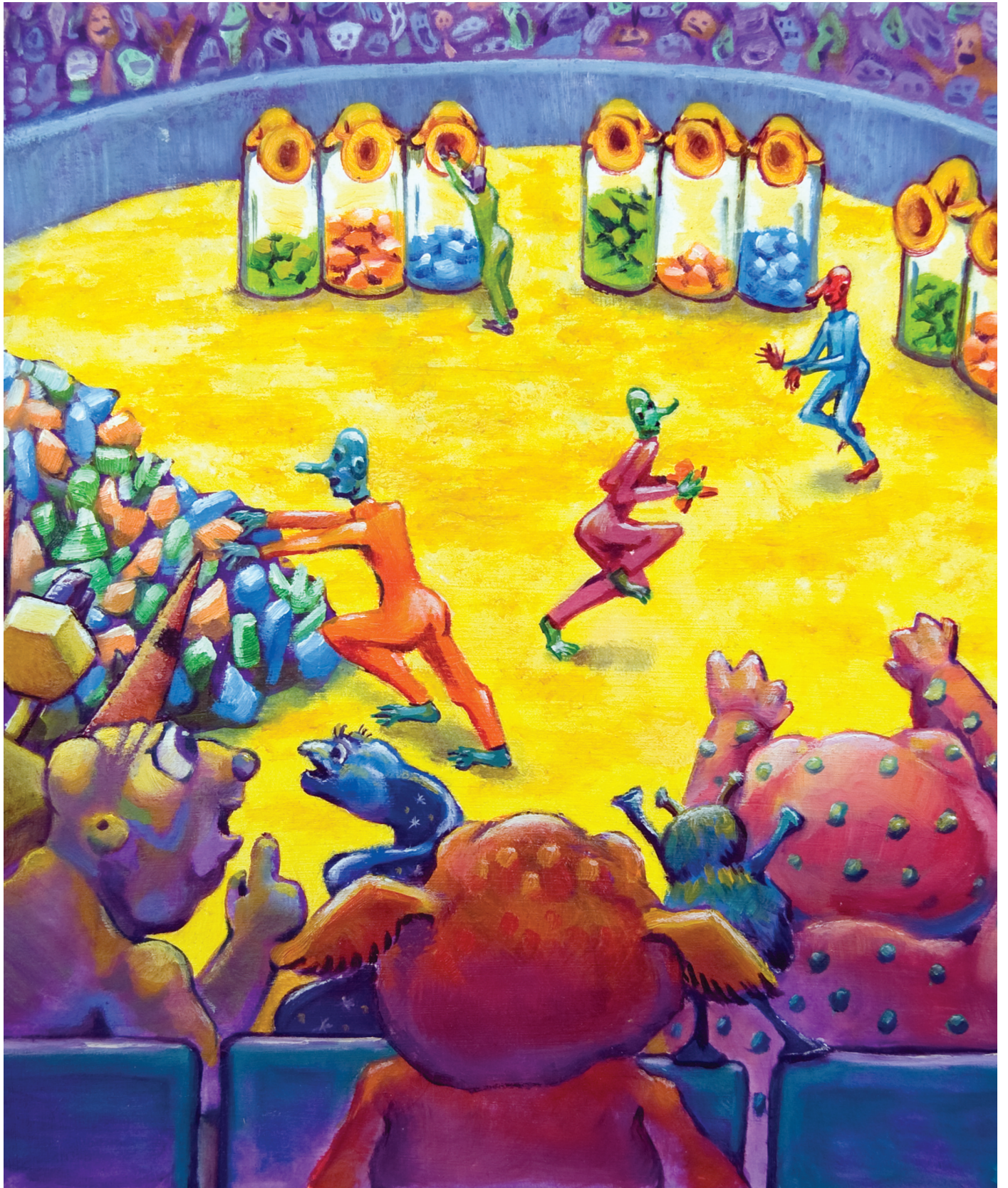
all in all, it still came out a balanced assortment of sorts.



Now, on this planet was a sort of being who really loved to sort.
They sorted at home and sorted at work. They even sorted for sport.



These beings sorted everything. They sorted day from night.
Then they sorted up from down, and they sorted black from white.
They were sorting all the time, and just when you'd think they were done,
they'd just resort to making two sorts of every single one.



It was just an amazing sight, this sort of sorting display.
Large numbers of beings would come to watch every single day.



Pretty soon almost everyone came to believe that sorting was the best sort of thing to achieve. So the sorters were paid quite well for their time, and their profits began to steadily climb.



Once the non-living things had been sorted out
all the sorters agreed there was really no doubt
that living beings should be sorted too.
So that is just what they set out to do.

They used photos of beings, and against the wall
was a stack of three bins with slots for them all.

Whether a being could sort or not
was what determined the correct slot.
Could the being sort.... and if so, how much?
Did the being display a "sorting touch"?



So all of those beings who sorted a lot,
were assigned great value, and placed at the top,
while all of the beings who sorted a little
were called "semi-sorters", assigned to the middle.



Because none of the green beings sorted at all,
they were "non-sorters", at the bottom of the wall.



Since sorters were so busy sorting away
it left little time for a non-sorting chore.
"Besides" they said, "We need more time to play!"
To sorters, non-sorting was "really a bore".



So most of the "boring" non-sorting things
had to be done by semi-sorter beings.
They received very little to do each chore,
while their working conditions were very poor.



They had more and more chores and less and less room,
as the sorting beings crowded them out.
It is not too surprising to see how, quite soon
there were undone chores lying all about.



The problem kept growing as the time passed by
because semi-sorters began to all try
to become full-time sorters, the ones at the top.
They said "Sorting's the way! Look what sorters have got!"



Now it's true every sorter had many times more than any being from the middle or lower. In fact, the sorters had much more indeed, than any being could possibly need. You can see how this was a serious problem, especially for all those assigned to the bottom.



They had less and less food and less and less space
as sorting increased at a feverish pace.
Beings with leaves and beings with scales,
beings with feathers and those with tails
all began dying off.... one by one.
It was clear something had to be done!



So sorters sorted through plan after plan attempting to fix the problem at hand. After some time, the sorters agreed there really was a planet-wide need for all semi-sorter sorting to stop, leaving all sorting to those at the top. Then semi-sorters could all start to do much more of the non-sorting stuff, which clearly, from anyone's point of view, was currently not done enough.



But the semi-sorters did not want to stop.
Like all of the sorters, they aimed for the top.
To give up all that they'd worked for so long
just didn't seem right. In fact, it seemed wrong.

They said to the sorters "If you want us to stop
you must share with us some of those things that you've got,
for we've worked just as hard as any of you.
Our efforts allowed you to do what you do."



Now, the sorters were so used to their sort of living that they simply refused to do this sort of giving.

It was a sad sort of standoff (a sorry state of sorts) a planet full of beings who had anger in their hearts.



Then another whole set of things came to light,
a new set of problems they'd now have to fight.
Sorting had bothersome side effects, you see....
so that everywhere you looked, there they would be.
There were day side effects and effects in the night.
there were left side effects and effects on the right.



There were top side effects and bottom ones too.
There were outside effects that made beings blue.



There were inside effects that made beings ill.
Effects were so bad that at times they could kill.

Still sorters were sorting away day and night regardless of all the lower beings' plight.

You see, sorters had lots of money to build homes far away from where side effects filled the air and the land and even the sea. So for a while they continued to be unaffected by all of these problems so grim.

However, one day these problems found them.





You see, semi-sorters had become really mad about sorting side effects and things sorters had. They felt that the sorters had way, way too much, so they began protests and riots and such.



While side effects grew at a terrible rate,
the very air itself became thick with hate.



Many beings were becoming extinct.
Even the sorters were right on the brink.
If a being becomes extinct, my friend,
that sort of being has come to its end,
and beings of that sort will never be found....
never....everafter....anywhere around.



When the seriousness of all this was clear
even the sortinest of sorters felt fear!

So the sorters finally began to look closely.
They started to see that the problem was mostly
that sorters themselves had been greatly mistaken
from the beginning, in the stand they had taken
on what was important and what was not.
They started to see that this was just what
had been at the core of the mess all along.

They finally admitted that they had been wrong.



Now they could see that some vital planet needs
could only be met by some non-sorting deeds,
those same sorts of deeds that had been left undone
to make time for things sorters thought were more fun.
Unless these non-sorting deeds could get done,
all of the beings would die.... every one!

Then acting quickly, the sorters uncovered
another fact that had lain undiscovered:

These very important deeds could be done
by only one sort of being....

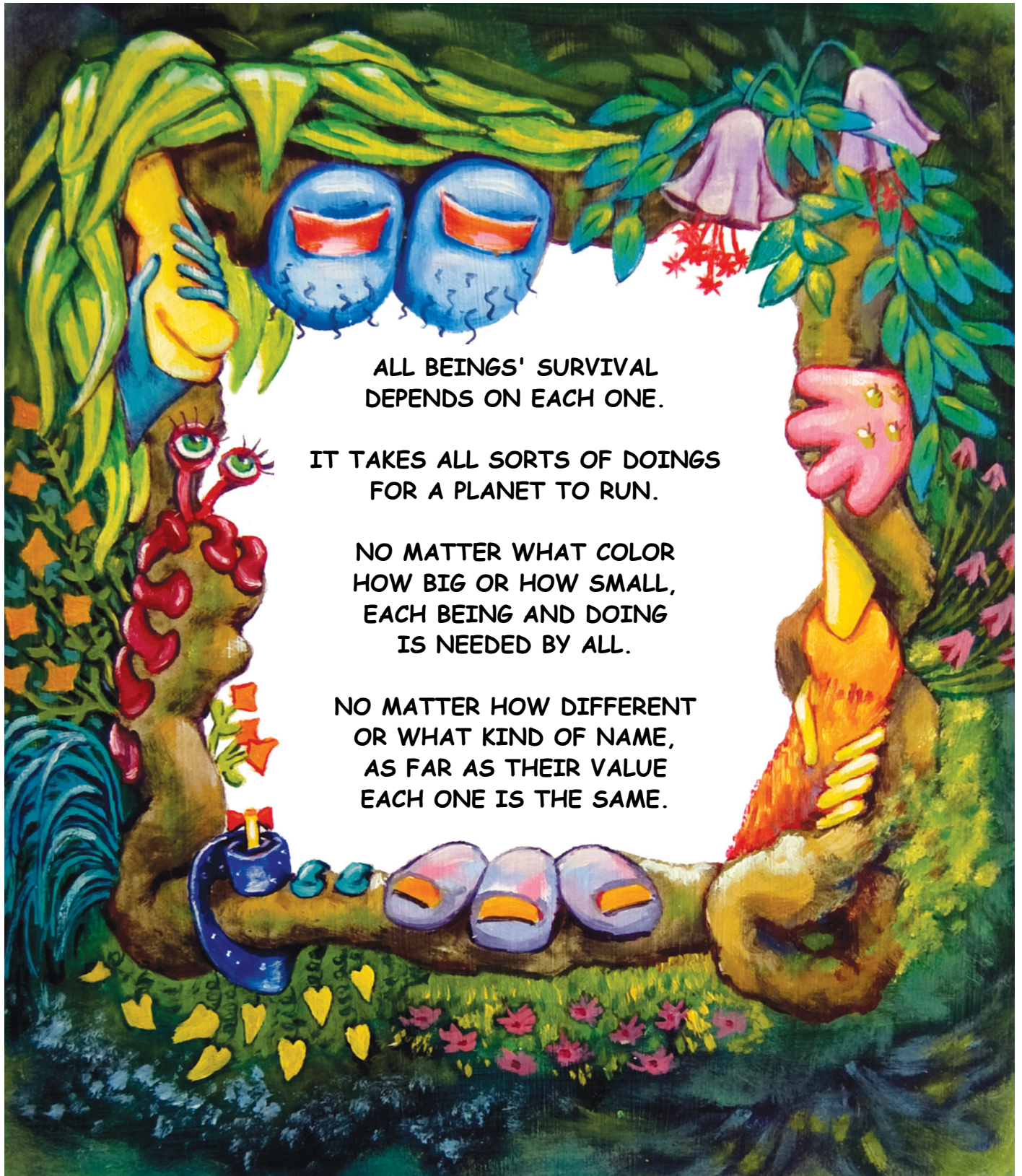
JUST ONE!



GREEN BEINGS !!

SO THOSE BEINGS SORTERS HAD FIRST DISMISSED
AS THE LEAST IMPORTANT, NOW TOPPED THE LIST!

After all the mistakes and strife and confusion,
the sorters soon reached the following conclusion:



ALL BEINGS' SURVIVAL
DEPENDS ON EACH ONE.

IT TAKES ALL SORTS OF DOINGS
FOR A PLANET TO RUN.

NO MATTER WHAT COLOR
HOW BIG OR HOW SMALL,
EACH BEING AND DOING
IS NEEDED BY ALL.

NO MATTER HOW DIFFERENT
OR WHAT KIND OF NAME,
AS FAR AS THEIR VALUE
EACH ONE IS THE SAME.



Once sorters got past all their fears and their tears,
they started doing things they hadn't in years.
They began doing those non-sorting things that help the planet run,
instead of always sorting for their personal profit and fun.



Why, they even started freely sharing all those things they used to hoard, so others could have important things they previously couldn't afford.



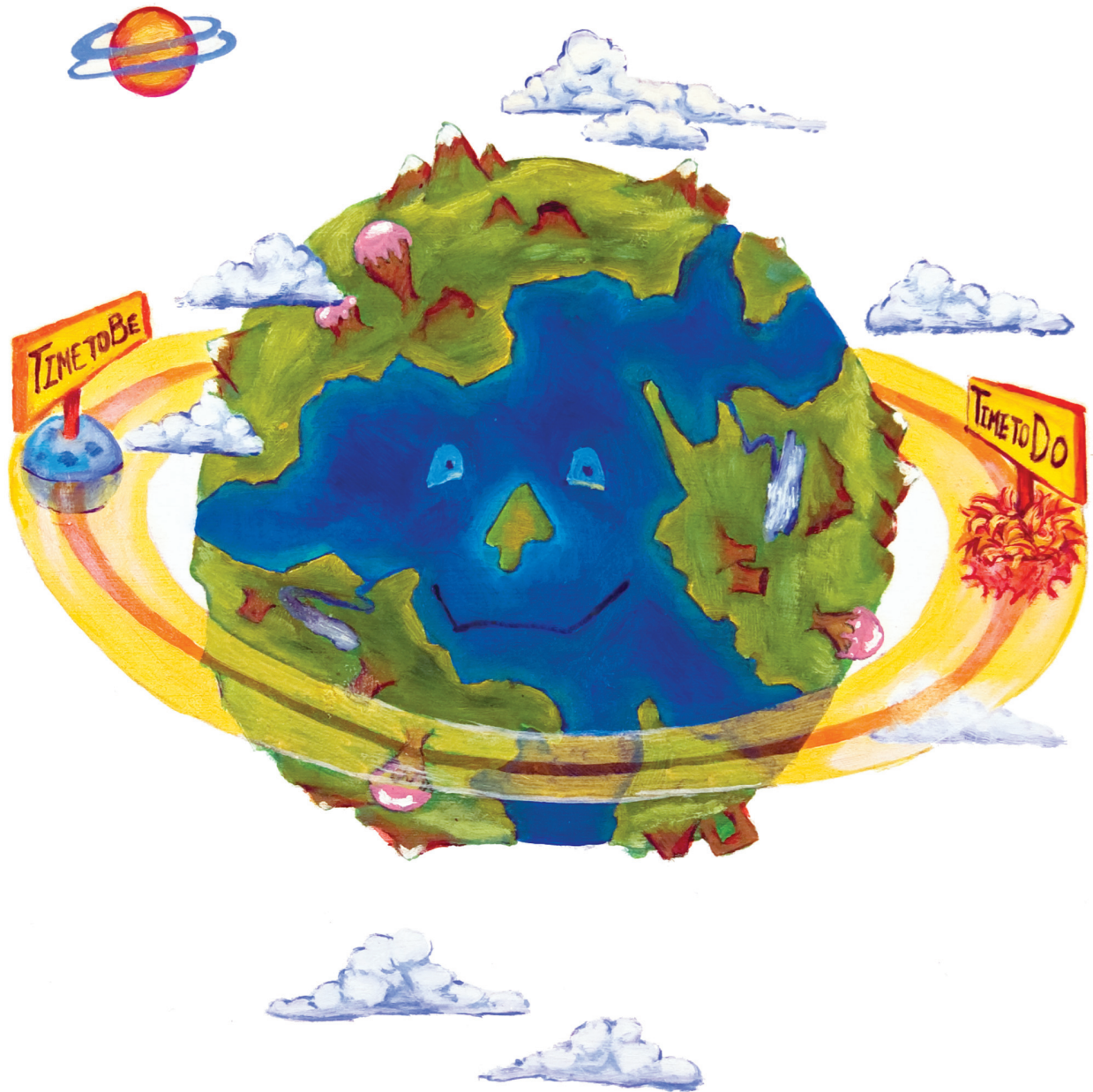
But the most important change was made by **EVERY** sort of being.



That change was to make a lot more room for beings that were green.



As the green beings grew,
they began doing more of what only green beings can.
So little by little, it made a big difference in how well the whole planet ran.



Well, before very long the planet returned
to being the place for which each being yearned.
So once again the planet had time, lots of time....
time for work, time for play, time for making words rhyme.



Why there was even time for just being, not really doing at all.



Speaking of beings....
there were all sorts.... some being large, some being small.

There were very short beings, designed to crawl,
and there were others who were really quite tall.

There were wide sorts and narrow sorts,
and sorts who sometimes wore short shorts.

There were sorts with leaves and sorts with legs.
There were sorts with wings who hatched from eggs.

There were sorts with scales and sorts with stings.
There were sorts with all manner of things.



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all in all, it still came out a balanced assortment of sorts.

The Beginning....